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THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF PROGRESS IN RELIGION

APRIL 1917

"Speak unto this people that they go forward"

New York Chicago
San Antonio

THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

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ONE hundred and sixty thousand dollars must be raised for the American Unitarian Association before this month is out, or we shall face the ignominy of having failed to do what we pluckily resolved to do, last May. If we fail, it will not be because we could not do what we tried to do, but simply because we forgot to do it, or did not really want to do it; or decided it was not worth doing, after all. For no one who knows the Unitarian constituency and the circumstances of the case can question our ability to raise the funds, if we will. And every dollar the Association asks for is a reasonable dollar. The demand for it is cold, plain common sense. We honestly need more money to do a self-respecting, missionary task. It is folly to let slip by the opportunities of church extension which now await us, for the lack of money. It is folly to let that Minister's Pension Fund dally so long, when every principle of good economics and administrative justice demands its service. It is folly to keep our Unitarian gospel penned in and cornered in its present meager place amongst the religious denominations of the land, simply because we cannot pay the bills of its proper promulgation. The Unitarian gospel ought to be a *big thing*, the country over, these days; a nobly potent factor in the shaping of men's ideas and aspirations. In the new Southwest, in the virilely developing Northwest, in the rapidly growing manufacturing centers of the East and Middle West—which in some regards are the most significant points of growth our nation contains—all over the country is need of the sort of sanity of conscience and progressive spirit which our gospel stands for. Why be niggardly about giving Truth its fair chance in these days of shifting idealisms? A hundred and sixty thousand dollars for the American Unitarian Association ought not to mean an exceptional splurge of generosity amongst our people; simply a most rational awakening to denominational common sense.

IT IS a good impulse that is impelling many churches, of various denominations, to bring the American flag into their church buildings for Sunday services. Some time ago, we had a wholesome movement throughout the country to put the flag upon our public schools. That was supremely rational; for patriotism, in its nobler aspects, is a vital factor in all true education. Now we are waking up to the fact that patriotism, in its nobler aspects, is, too, a vital factor in all that religion means. The Hebrew prophets understood this. Their religion was a form of patriotism, and their patriotism was a mode of religion; righteousness, justice, mercy, and truth are as indispensably involved in what one's love of country should comprise, as in what one's aspirations of religion should include. There is, indeed, a type of patriotism that can be very cheap, base, tawdry, and ignoble; missing entirely the fine idealism which true religion stands for. But so, too, there may be a type of religion, self-centered, soul-isolating, vapid in sentimentality, and futile in impractical "other-worldliness," which misses step with the sturdy idealisms of social service, brotherly loyalties of good neighborship, and strong responsibilities of human progress, which true love of country stands for. The flag in the church is a symbol of a better understanding both of what religion and patriotism ought to mean in modern life. If the two ideals cannot be closely integrated and identified, there is something wrong about one, or the other, or both.

* * *

THE occasion of this new impulse to bring the flag into the church may indeed give pause to some people. People are thinking more about the American flag just now, they are thrilling with the ardor of patriotism, they are finding an identification between religion and love of country, chiefly because there is so much "war-talk" going on. We kindle new enthusiasms about our flag, because there is a chance we

may have to fight somebody pretty soon. We talk with sterner accent about "true Americanism," because America is likely, sooner or later, to come to clash with an enemy people who are not Americans. That, of course, is human nature. We become interested in things preeminently when they become dramatically interesting to us; and the tragedy and heroism of war are the most dramatically interesting incidents of life to which our civilized souls have yet learned to respond. The more's the pity. In veritable fact, patriotism is a sterner tax on the real consciences and hearts of men in times of peace, than in times of war. True liberty, essential justice and righteousness, the real fact of brotherly love and human progress, run greater risks of peril in times of piping peace than in times of dramatic war-acclaim. We need the American flag in churches, not so much to arouse us to ideals of self-sacrifice and stern devotion to our national aspirations in times when foreign enemies threaten us with dispute, but in the days when insidious political corruptions, debased ideals of public service, languid infidelities of political indolence and inertia permit things to happen in American cities and states that are hostile to the true American idealism. The religion of patriotism counts for most when its appeals are least dramatic; when its enthusiasms are least keyed to noisy zests. But the religion of patriotism is in itself a very vital concept. The flag in the church is the most rational bit of ecclestical symbolism that a modern house of religion can contain. Let's be glad for any exigency which brings the symbol there, and let's be quick to seize the royal opportunity which that symbolism gives to us for its deepest and worthiest interpretation. The war craze may soon pass by; but the American flag must stay in the churches.

* * *

WHAT rights have majorities that minorities are bound to respect? And what privileges have minorities that majorities may be expected to recognize? Two incidents of recent times bring curious questions as to just where the minority conscience stands, as regards the prerogatives and responsibilities of majorities. One is the case of a woman imprisoned and compelled to the extreme ordeal of "compulsory feeding," in New York, because she became a lawbreaker for conscience' sake. She had certain views regarding "birth control" which did not agree with the generally accepted views. She believed that human lives were wronged and the course of true civilization arrested because of the mistake of the generally accepted view; and because the generally accepted view was so pronounced as to be written sternly into statute law, forbidding the promulgation of certain information which the advocates of the "birth control" reform had to give, this woman felt it her conscientious duty to defy the judgment of the majority and break the law, and suffer the martyrdom of the conscientious lawbreaker. Was she right, or was she wrong?

* * *

THE other incident of the clash between majority conscience and minority conscience occurred in the Senate of the United States. The President of the Nation, representing as he believed the majority of the people of the nation, asked of Congress power to do things which he believed ought to be done to maintain the rights and honor of the American people. An overwhelming majority of Congress in both houses believed that the crisis of the hour demanded that such authority must be given, and were most eager to give it. But the authority was not given. The will of the majority did not prevail. The will of a little group of twelve or thirteen men in the Senate prevailed against the majority; because the archaic rules of that body permitted the "filibuster;" and the "filibuster" was the method used by the consciences of the small majority to defeat the consciences of the great majority. Was this right or wrong?

* * *

IN EITHER case the principle was the same. We express no views as to the fundamental issue of "birth control," and we are not saying here whether we find reason in Senator La-Follette's pacifist faith or not. The issue is unaffected by the worthiness of these individual views. The issue lies in the

right of the minority—ultimately, in the right of the individual—to make his individual conscience defeat social conscience. Has society a right by its own force to control and check, not only the evil propensities of men's passions which do hurt the social order, but also to control and check the right-meaning ardors of conscience in those who see things differently from society as a whole? More pointedly, has the individual conscience a right to thwart social conscience by whatever means chance or tradition may throw in its way?

* * *

LET us admit that right is oftener in the minority than in the majority, as human affairs now go; and that every step of progress must first be the vision of men who have the vast multitudes of their fellow men dead-set against them. It is not equally true, however, that *every* minority is always right, or that every dreamer who sees things different from his neighbors is therefore wiser or more progressive than they. At any given moment there are more wrong minorities than right ones; more dreamers whose dreams are folly than whose vision is the vision of eternal truth. And vehemence of conscience is no sure sign of infallible clarity of reason. What then? More and more we are coming to recognize the rights of social conscience and social reason as fundamental in all human progress. That means we are coming to realize that while society as a whole may not be infallible either of conscience or reason, yet society as a whole must assume the responsibility of insisting on what it holds right and reasonable as over against the individual or minority conscience and reason. That is always recognized in practical government. Society assumes the right to define theft, murder, arson, adultery, and fraud, and to insist that its definitions hold, however much some people might like to revise those definitions to suit their individual cases. Society insists on its own ideas as to prostitution, gambling, the liquor traffic and the drug evil. A good many individual consciences have other ideas about these things than those generally prevailing. A good many men have moral codes which run counter to society's demands. There is growing up a social conscience about child labor, the minimum wage, public sanitation, and corporation-control, which runs very much counter to the honest convictions of a good many individual men of the older school. Nevertheless, the public conscience writes its conviction into laws. Shall private conscience do what it can to frustrate and evade these laws, because they are believed wrong?

* * *

ARE we not growing to the realization that public conscience and the will of the majority, while a very fallible thing, quite likely to go wrong in a good many incidental ways, is yet the most dominant factor in the evolution of human progress? Must we not see that everything that tends to weaken the integrity of the "will-of-men-together" by the magnification of the "will-of-the-man-apart" is hostile to social growth? There are as many foolish reasons as wise ones, perhaps, and as many crooked consciences as straight ones, among individual men and women. The right of a LaFollette to filibuster is commensurate with the right of the reactionary enemy of new progressive ideals in industry and social justice. The right of the woman who believes in "birth control" to break the law by "purveying forbidden information to the masses," is exactly commensurate with the right of the woman who wants to keep an evil resort in the Tenderloin to break the law her way. Society as a whole has a right in either case to the last word in the matter. Is it wise in any way to weaken the responsibility of society as a whole in either case?

* * *

OF COURSE the final responsibility of the individual conscience comes to bear in the shaking of social conscience to its highest potency. This is the crux of the whole matter. Majorities are so often stupid, and even unjust! The social conscience is so often narrow, and fettered, and dulled, and demeaned by inertias of false traditions and the clamor of unworthy public leaders. The great business of noble souls is to help rectify the mischief of these things and persuade the masses of people of the need of saner views as to birth control, marriage relation, the

evils of warfare, the responsibility of legislation, and the like. A wise democracy courts the widest interchange of opinion and frankest opportunities of free speech and public discussion. The responsibility on every man is to make his manhood count to the last degree in making the will of the majority what it ought to be. But not until one is ready to justify the deeds of a Giteau and a Guy Faux, the methods of the East End dive-keeper, and the law-evading liquor dealer, who honestly believe in "personal liberty," can we justify the action of the most resolutely conscientious man who says, "My conscience before society's conscience, my will before the will of the majority, if I can find the trick or the method which will give my conscience its way." The recognition of the right of society as a whole as dominant over any individual right deemed hostile to society's welfare is the first condition of modern progress. The alert responsibility of every man to do what he can to make society's voice as true, and reasonable, and just as possible, is the other side of the matter. The two cannot be wholesomely separated.

* * *

WE ADD to our editorial staff, this month, a new name: that of the Rev. Kenneth E. Evans of Elizabeth, N. J., who is to assume the responsibilities of Editor for the Middle States. We are sorry that Mr. Wiers, who has held this responsibility ever since the launching of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE, now feels compelled to give it up. But we know that Mr. Evans will find his own way of making us satisfied with what is to be. All news items and communications regarding the work in the Conference of the Middle States and Eastern Canada should be sent to him. His address is 228 Murray St., Elizabeth, N. J.

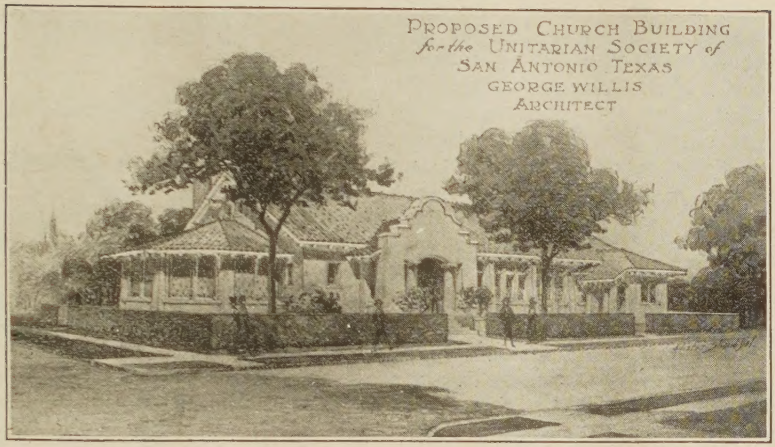
A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT WILSON.

The officers of the American Unitarian Association sent last week a message to the President, declaring their hearty support in the present crisis. Dr. Eliot, president, was in California at the Pacific Coast Conference, and the secretary, Rev. Louis C. Cornish, in Virginia, but their concurrence was obtained by telegraph. We are glad that these officers of our national body took this action. It was done in the right way at the right time, and should have the approval of our whole constituency. This is the message sent:

"We, the undersigned, are members of the staff of the American Unitarian Association, but we speak only for ourselves. We are, however, by virtue of our tasks conversant with the sentiments of multitudes of our people. We have no hesitation in saying that they are loyal to the United States, that they desire heartily to support you during these tremendous hours of our nation's life and, if need be, will prove their devotion to the Government as their fathers did in the days of long ago.

"We personally desire to respond to your appeal to the country. We deplore the adjournment of Congress without placing in your hands the necessary powers to defend the rights of our people which have been fearfully challenged. We deplore the fact that a minority of senators were able to hinder the accomplishment of the clear purpose of Congress, and we express our support of you in all the undertakings which may be necessary to maintain the freedom of American citizens and the honor of the American name in such an hour as this. We are not war-lovers, but we feel that America has been assailed, and that the solemn interests at stake now demand prompt and forceful action on the part of our Government. In your position as the head of the National Government, the commander-in-chief of the military and naval forces of the United States, we desire to express our hearty support of you in whatever measures may be necessary for the welfare of America. Signed: Samuel A. Eliot, president; Louis C. Cornish, general secretary; Henry M. Williams, treasurer; Samuel B. Nobbs, field secretary for New England; Elmer S. Forbes, secretary of social service; Henry Hallam Saunderson, secretary of liberal evangelism; William I. Lawrance, secretary of religious education; W. Forbes Robertson, assistant secretary."

The Dream for San Antonio



WHEN the Editor of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE came to Texas, something over four years ago, he found a perplexing tanglement of discouragements and encouragements. This was the third attempt to build up a Unitarian church in San Antonio, and the failure of earlier attempts had rather a pessimistic reaction on those who remembered them. San Antonio had not, moreover, the reputation of being the most progressive of Southwestern cities, nor the one most open to new ideas. In the census it rated as the largest city in the State, with something like a hundred and twenty thousand population. A third of these were Mexican, another fraction negro, and the advantages and disadvantages which go with a community of "tourist" aspirations rested distractingly upon it. San Antonio had too much the affliction of substantial contentment with things as they were, politically, socially, and religiously, to make the advent of an enterprise of spiritual and intellectual progress any too welcome.

On the other hand, an inspiriting sojourn of Rev. H. C. Parker and his wife, the winter previous, with attractive services held under the auspices of the American Unitarian Association had most delightfully prepared the way for Unitarian adventures, and Mrs. Robert C. Davis of the National Alliance had been here, too, to organize the women for plucky endeavor, and we found a loyal band of people ready to hazard the exploit of liberalism with us.

Four years have changed many things in San Antonio. Financially, they have been very hard years. The unsettled conditions in Mexico most seriously hamper our local business and diminish our tourist enterprise. The first year of the European war brought disaster to the cotton crop, which is the staple support of Texas, and two woefully wet and cold winters in succession gave us a bad setback as a winter resort. All that was discouraging, and the Unitarian cause suffered a setback with everything else.

But meanwhile San Antonio has waked up, commercially and socially. She has got over her malady of self-contentment. She has discovered that she wants to be better than she was, materially, commercially, socially, and, I hope, morally, though I am not so sure about that. The city has been entirely repaved since we came here—and with more than good intentions. Streets have been widened, a beautiful park system developed, considerable building enterprise prosecuted, and a very vehement "boosting campaign" started. That all helps Unitarianism, not directly but indirectly. When a city becomes alert it becomes more susceptible to the contagion of progressive ideas; and, of course, as a city bebecomes more attractive it becomes more likely to receive some influx of people who ought to like the Unitarian church—provided the Unitarian church proves decently attractive itself.

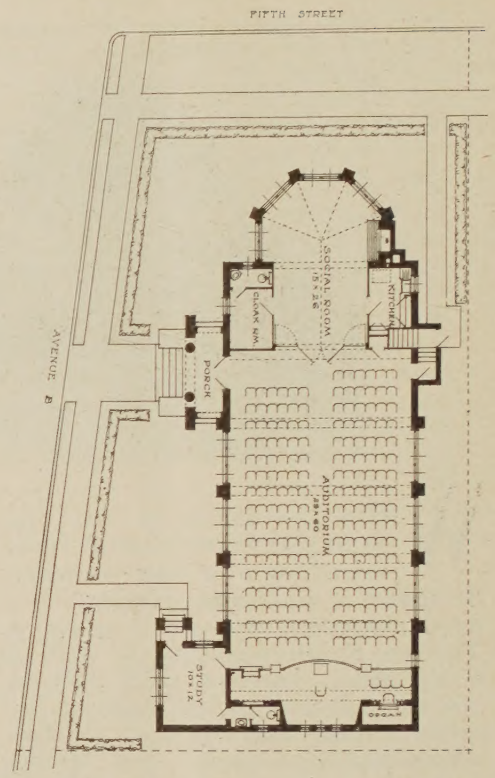
And there is the point which we have now reached. We have reasonably prospered during these four years, and at

any rate made Unitarianism respected in these parts. We are no longer distrusted for nocuous heresies or damned to the blight of demeaning obscurity. People know about us—and what they know is not wholly to our disadvantage.

But the place we ought to fill in the city cannot be filled so long as we meet simply in hall services, and remain in the category of "new things just started." That is why we insist that we must have a church building. We cannot afford to build a church, but we can no longer afford not to build a church. The Unitarian cause suffers in prestige in longer delay; but, more than that, we cannot be of the service to the community which we ought to be, until we have our church building.

The American Unitarian Association has been very generous to us. It has not only contributed liberally to our running expenses from the first, but it has purchased in our behalf a most fortunately located lot, in the center of the city and in the vicinity of the other influential churches of the town. Now we are endeavoring to raise the money for putting an adequate building on that lot. A local architect has prepared a most satisfying plan for us, a view of which is at the head of this article. The structure is to be of hollow tile with stucco facing, a little suggestive of the mission style of building so dominant in these parts and so congenial to our semitropical climate; but most of all has he sought to emphasize the homelike, neighborly, hospitable spirit of our free gospel—unaffected, unconventional, and of self-respecting modesty. The interior provides for an auditorium seating something over two hundred people; a social room that can be opened into the auditorium, with hospitable fireplace, convenient kitchen, and other practical adjuncts; and a minister's study. It all will cost about $7,500—and what will it cost our people of pluck, and courage, and tireless activity to raise that money?

We haven't a single rich man in our constituency, and everybody in San Antonio talks poor. *But we must have our building!* A thousand dollars are already in our hands at this writing, and more, we trust, on the way. Dr. Eliot of the American Unitarian Asso-



ciation approves our plans and commends our purpose of pushing the enterprise, now. The National Alliance will doubtless help us, too. But we want a lot of help, from everywhere, and we try to deserve it. On a hard soil we have tried to make the Unitarian cause bring forth fruits of substantial value. Unitarianism in Texas does not stand for radical unrest or eccentric oddities of intellectual experimentation. It stands for sane and sober responsibility in thought-progress; for the constructive values of honest spiritual emancipation. And no section of the earth needs the sanity and the constructive spirit of progress which we represent more than this robustly growing, great Southwest. It is not the Unitarians of San Antonio alone, but the Unitarians of the whole American constituency that have vital concern with the success of this work. And so, with utter frankness and confidence, we ask our neighbors all over the continent to help us build our church. It is you who succeed with us if we succeed. It is you who fail with us if we should fail. But why talk of failure, when success can be made so easy—and interesting?

A Humanistic View of Religious Motives

By Rev. James W. MacDonald,
Minister of the First Church in Upton, Mass.

THERE was a time when man held the belief that *all* the events and conditions of the world were under the control of supernatural beings, whom he variously called divinities, angels, spirits, fairies, demons. Whatever were the happenings in the world, whatever were the circumstances of his life, all were the results of the activities of these supernatural powers. They determined everything; his will amounted to nothing. The most he could do was to curry their favor by prayer, and magic, and ceremony. He believed the events and conditions of the world were under the control of supernatural beings, and that man had no power whatever in deciding those events and conditions. This belief mankind continued to hold on to until it slowly learned otherwise through experience. Man used to pray to a rain-spirit to save him from the awful consequences of a scarcity of water, until through painful experience he gradually learned that there was no help from such a source. So that today he relies not on a rain-spirit but on man-made reservoirs—human creations. He used to pray to a God or Goddess of Pestilence to protect him from the ravages of disease. But today he is finding it more advantageous to rely upon medical science—once more a human creation. He used to believe that the hungry were sometimes miraculously fed by angels and ravens. Today he no longer believes in food-carrying ravens or manna from heaven, and if he did he would be afraid that a business corporation would get control of the ravens and form a heavenly-bread trust, so that the poor would go hungry after all. He believes instead that if the lot of the poor and destitute is to be improved it will be through the agency of unselfish human effort. Because of his fear of those forces of nature which sometimes worked him harm, he used to pray and sacrifice to the God of the wind, fire, storm, sea, and the rest of the divinities at whose special command he believed the one or the other of the natural forces were let loose upon him. Today he knows that his best protection against the ravages of nature is the protection he devises himself. He knows that instead of cringing in fear before nature and seeking a miraculous escape from her, it were better to seek to conquer her forces and subdue them to his human will. Thus has man gradually learned that the conditions of his life, and of the world in which he lives, are largely under his control. Once he used to "pray and offer up all manner of petitions, then to wait for the answer." That was all that he felt it was in his power to do. Now he works as well as prays. He realizes that oftentimes his prayers can be answered only by his own efforts. He used to look to the angels to do things. Now he does them himself.

Yes, that is true, we say, man used to believe that "the angels" did everything, but nobody believes that any more.

I am not so sure of that after all. The general attitude of some people towards life makes it appear as if they still expected a great deal from the angels. There are people, for instance, who simply muddle through life. They have no concern for themselves. They say they will get a living somehow. Apparently they trust to luck, and the angels. Because of their lack of concern they live a precarious existence, and oftentimes it happens that at last, owing to their generally irresponsible ways of living, they find themselves overwhelmed in trouble that is too deep for them to muddle out of. Then they immediately begin to consider themselves hardly dealt with. Fate, they say, has been very cruel to them. They cannot understand why it is that God has caused such trouble to come into their lives, when if they did but know it they are themselves chiefly to blame for their condition. Again, do you not know people who are always ascribing every event and condition in the world, no matter what it be, to the will of

God? If a calamity occurs, owing largely, it may be, to the negligence of one or more individuals in positions of authority, for instance such a calamity as the Eastland boat disaster on the Chicago River last summer, or the recent school fire in one of the suburbs of Boston, there are always people who wonder "how it is that Providence allows such things to happen," and they expect the minister of religion to reconcile the calamity with the idea of a God of love who controls all the affairs of the world, or they may even piously call the calamity "a judgment of God."

To my mind they could not be guilty of greater blasphemy. It is just such people who have little real interest in movements to improve human society and better the conditions of life. They look upon poverty as a "divine institution," a part of "God's established order." "Does it not say in the Bible," they tell you, "'The poor ye have always with you'?" To their mind a person suffering from disease is "smitten of God and afflicted;" and an epidemic is a "visitation of divine wrath." And now they are saying that God has brought about this war for some wise purpose. They pray for God to bless the poor, "to comfort the sick and afflicted," and to bring peace again to the earth if it be his will. And that ends the matter for them. They leave the poor, and the sick, and the war to the angels. In other words, they never seem to realize that the calamities which are ever and anon occurring in modern life owing to somebody's negligence, and the facts of poverty, disease, war, and a great many more of the ills of society such as the drink traffic, the so-called social evil, the sweated industries, and bad housing conditions, are not necessary elements of a divinely ordained system, but are things the majority of which are absolutely under man's control, and the rest are more and more coming under his control.

It is against this attitude of mind which insists upon seeing every evil in the world and society as a dispensation of God, that every movement for the bettering of society has had to contend. When in England legislation was first proposed to better the conditions of the workers in the cotton factories, the objection was made that it was not well to encourage among the common people discontent with the lowly condition in life in which God had placed them. And when in this country the movement for the abolition of slavery was started, it was met with the objection that slavery was an institution established by God. And so in these latter days, among those who are opposed or indifferent to reform movements in society, are to be found those who believe that all conditions and facts in human society are parts of a divine plan and that it is just as well not to meddle too much with them. They say "there may be some things in the world that do not appear just right, but we do not know everything, and God can take care of his world much better than we can." And so they leave things to the angels.

But there is another and totally different view of things, which is held by an ever-increasing number of men and women in this modern age, the view, namely, that this is man's world, and that it practically depends upon man himself what the world shall be like. I want to add a little to the text, "Not unto angels, *but unto men*, did he subject the world to come." The world that shall be is in the hands of men and women. Humanity must work out the new order of things, the kingdom of God that is to be. For we are beginning to realize that the kingdom will come only by human effort. We must do more than pray the petition in the Lord's Prayer—"Thy kingdom come"—we must set ourselves about the task of bringing it to pass. That is what the men and women of today are coming more and more to believe. So we are being more and more impatient with conditions as they have been in the world, and are striving with determination to bring about some improvement.

And we *are* making improvements. For instance, we are lessening the ravages of disease. Sir William Osler, in speaking of the relation of medical science to the war, is quoted in a recent number of the *Survey* as saying that fifty years ago, at the close of the American Civil War, we had no positive knowledge of the cause of any of the great scourges of mankind, typhoid, typhus, cholera, and plague, but that thanks to

the progress of the last decade it has been possible to protect against epidemics of all kinds, the whole of the Western front with its hundreds of thousands of soldiers, and science has been able to bring under control the devastating epidemics of Serbia.

Again, think of the difference between the treatment of tuberculosis today and the treatment of it a generation ago. A few years ago a tubercular patient was considered incurable. Today medical science says tuberculosis is preventable and curable, and that if proper precautions are taken it can be eliminated from society. So there is a campaign of society against tuberculosis which is almost world-wide, and which is bringing about a great diminution in the death roll of this disease.

Another instance of the fact that society is determined to control the conditions under which it shall live is seen in the strenuous campaign against the drink traffic. In this country the traffic is on its last legs. Not much longer in these United States will it be allowed to wreck homes and spread disease and poverty. Society is beginning to realize it is better off without the saloon; so the saloon will have to go.

Then there are the movements to better the conditions of labor, and as a result our modern industries are gradually being permeated with the spirit of justice and equity.

These are simply a few instances of how humanity is setting about the task of bringing in upon the earth the kingdom of God, the kingdom of social righteousness and love of one's fellow men.

There is much yet to be done. The work has hardly begun, and it has received a great setback through this war. Yet the war itself is evidence enough that the world is practically under man's control. *Man* brought on this war, and if wars are to cease from the earth it will not be because men pray to God to stop war, it will be because men stop fighting. That is a very simple truth, but some people do not seem to believe it. They are always wanting a day of prayer for peace. They believe that somehow it depends upon God to make peace between nations. I do not. I believe it depends upon *man*.

War between any two given nations will be practically impossible when the common people of these two nations really believe the very simple truth that there cannot be war between these two nations if they, the common people, have no desire for war and refuse to fight. And the horrors of the present war in Europe are making the common people have little desire for any future wars, and are putting them more and more into a certain settled frame of mind that will lead them to say to those who bring about wars—but get others to do most of the fighting—"If you want war, you can do the fighting. We shall not. Your call to us to be patriotic, to fight for country and freedom, we refuse to obey. It is a false call that has deluded us long enough. We love our country, but we have no quarrel with the common people of other nations, who love their country. Against the nation that you are pleased to call our enemy, we have no desire to go to war for the purpose of winning or retaining a place in the commercial sun, and winning or retaining advantageous trade-markets—all for your benefit, not ours; just as the common people of the nation that you call our enemy have no desire to go to war against our nation. We have both decided that the war will get neither of us anything but suffering and hardship, no matter which side wins. Therefore we, the common people of both nations, think we are better off without a war, and we rather think there will not be any war, for the simple reason that we who would have to do most of the fighting if there were any war refuse to fight—unless it be to fight you, if you persist in trying to plunge us into war against our common human brothers in another country."

That is what the common people in both countries are some day going to say, when the respective money-powers of two nations, because of commercial rivalry and greed, begin to talk of war. And, let me repeat, it is the horrors of the war in Europe that are putting the common people of the various countries more and more into the frame of mind to say it, and to mean it when they say it.

To common humanity is given the

power to decide what this world shall be. The "world to come" is in its hands, therefore every institution must serve and develop humanity, or it must go. Institutions were made for man, not man for institutions. Development of humanity—that is the supreme test for all institutions and things in this world. The day of the complete realization of the kingdom of God is not yet, but its dawning is sure, because man is more than circumstance. God meant this world for humanity, and he meant humanity to have control of it.

"For not unto angels did he subject the world to come . . . . .

"What is man that thou art mindful of him?

"Thou crownedst him with glory and honor.

"And didst set him over the works of thy hands.

"Thou didst set all things in subjection under his feet."

The Quarter-Hour Communion

(*Un quart d'heure pour Dieu*)

Conducted by DR. FRANK CARLETON DOAN, author of *Religion and the Modern Mind.*

Readers of this Department are invited to join the "Quarter-Hour Communion," an order of American mystics, the members of which aim to spend at least fifteen minutes each day in prayer and meditation. No fees. No officers. No meetings. No constitution. For membership blanks and further information, address the Editor of this Department, Summit, N. J.

The Souls of Dead Soldiers.

I.

During the two years and a half of this blasphemous war, they have shot, some say, over two million human beings—"shot their souls into eternity," as the grim old Carlyle said in speaking of another great war. Somehow I can't get these poor wretches off my mind this Eastertime. Where are these men now? And what do you suppose they are thinking now about this dastardly business which cost them their lives?

This is but another of those new and portentous questions raised by this Great War for the first time in the minds of thoughtful men. Of course there are two kinds of people to whom this question will have no interest.

(1) The extremely orthodox Christian for one. He is all ready with his answer: Soldiers, who have accepted a certain creed about Christ have gone to heaven; those rejecting this creed have gone to hell. And that's the end of them forever. I assume that no reader of the Advance believes in heaven or hell in this traditional sense. To accept Christ is not so easy as all that. The way to profess Christ is not by accepting some decision of a grizzled church council; but by accepting his law of love and trying to live in his spirit. The man who does this is in heaven already, here and now, and everywhere and all the time. The man who rejects Christ's law of love and is living contrary to his spirit is in hell already. All my readers are agreed to this I am sure. For this Department then I may safely assume that the souls of these dead soldiers have not been sorted over by some theologizing St. Peter and sent some to heaven and some to hell forever. Where else then forever? I want to know.

(2) Unbelievers and agnostics. From the point of view of the unbeliever, these wretched soldiers are simply dead, and that's the end of the whole matter so far as they are concerned. As for the agnostic, he says we don't know whether there is a future life; that in any event we can't know anything of the nature of that future life; that it has nothing to do with this world; and that we had better stop our vain speculations and turn our thoughts and energies to the more practical things of this earth.

I have great respect for these unbelievers and agnostics. In many ways they are the finest people on earth today—sincere, honest, fearless. And yet they ought to know that the day of unbelief and even of agnosticism in this matter of a future life is about up. Huxley and his generation have gone

by, and their place has been taken by a generation of equally sincere and exact scientists who believe they have proved that there is a future life for every one of us. I am thinking of such authorities as Alfred Russell Wallace, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, William James, Dr. James H. Hyslop, Henri Bergson, M. Sage, M. Richet, and Lombroso. These and a score of others after years of cautious, painstaking investigations, under conditions where fraud was rendered practically impossible, came to accept what they call the "spiritistic hypothesis." Let me give you a few of their conclusions:

II.

There is a future life for every vigorous soul—a personal future. When we get there, we know that we are there. The soul takes up its new life over there just where it left off here. It has the same characteristics, the same likes and dislikes, the same weakness or strength of character, the same passions, the same ideals. As a recent writer has put it, it is a good deal like taking off your overcoat in the outer hall and going into your living room. You are the same you, no matter what room you go into, and no matter what clothes you have on. Just so, you don't change your character when you put off this earthly garment of a body and go naked-souled into the life just beyond.

I say "just beyond," for it is the unanimous opinion of all these authorities that the next life is not far off in some distant heaven or hell, but near at hand. It is not like going into some strange and foreign country. It is more like just stepping into the next room in your father's house. Those who have gone before us are still close by, and are still taking an earnest interest in the affairs of this world.

III.

They do say, however, that there are certain important differences between this life and that other life beyond the grave. For one thing, they have no body over there. And we hear that the unhappiest man over there is the man who has lived a purely physical life over here, a man of physical passions and appetites, a man of greed, and so on. The reason for his agony of soul is not far to seek. His soul goes over, is still a prey to all these passionate, greedy desires, but has no body through which to satisfy these passions and desires. And that's hell.

Here is a man, let us say, who lives his whole life in greed for wealth. Perhaps he is a speculator on the Stock Exchange. He has no soul for anything except stock quotations. He dies and leaves all behind him in his safe deposit box. He goes into a spiritual realm where there are no stocks or bonds to be bought or sold. There is nothing for him to do; nothing he knows how to do. He is in hell, if ever a man was. Like an infant he must begin at the beginning to learn the ways of the spirit and love the things that are eternal.

Or here is a man who knows no higher law than the law of physical force. If your enemy threatens you, shoot him, blow his brains out, disembowel him, brutalize him, put him out of the way. Now, what is a man who knows no higher law than this to do when he finds himself on the other side of the great divide, where there are no guns he can shoot, no swords he can flourish, no bayonet he can thrust into the quivering heart of his enemy? What will he do when the only weapons he has ever learned how to use are all taken away from him, and his spirit goes empty-handed and empty-souled into the great beyond? He will find just one weapon over there, the very one he has persistently discarded in this life—the weapon of love. But he doesn't know how to use it; that's the hell of it.

Well, he will have to become a pacifist at last. There is a certain grim humor in this. He will have to learn at last to use the pacifist's weapon of love. He will have to come to it. He will have to accept Christ's law of love, and learn and consider at last that the only way to disarm your enemy in the long eternal run is to love him.

IV.

They say, these modern authorities, that we shall have a greater insight into spiritual things over there. We shall have the same spirit, think the same thoughts, feel the same desires, and passions, and ambitions; but with a wonderfully broadened and clarified

vision. This, we are told, is both a blessing and a curse. A curse—for it must be tragic to see with such awful clearness the follies and mistakes of our life on this earth. But a blessing—for we can see at last that all this is past, is behind us forever. With clear vision now we can, if we will, make a new beginning and live closer for all eternity to the law of love.

V.

And now, what has all this to do with the dead soldiers whose bodies lie buried or openly rotting on the fields of Europe? These million or more souls they have shot into eternity, where are they now? According to the best scientific evidence they are still living beyond the great divide. What then are they thinking, and what doing, now that they can no longer load cannon or throw grenades?

The moment after death they have the same passions they were feeling in the hour of their death—fear, hatred, anger, suspicion, horror, disgust. But they have no visible means, no bodies through which to express these unholy passions of war. For this first after-moment their souls are in hell.

Yet only for the moment. Soon their spiritual eyes are opened. They begin to see the tragic mistake they have made; to understand the folly and futility of the "cause" in which they have just sacrificed their lives.

They begin to see the folly and futility of trying to settle any international dispute by a resort to arms, this wholesale shooting of souls like themselves into eternity. Their free spirits go ranging over the history of the past. They see how war after war has been fought, nation after nation gone down, each clamoring for its own rights, and each claiming to be the defender of the rights of all mankind; how they have gone down to no purpose into dust and ashes, only to be forgotten of men.

They begin to see what sordid motives are back of this filthy war in which they have lost their lives; how they have given their lives in the attempt to settle a dispute conceived in the vainglorious and greedy souls of a few diplomats and kings and hangers-on of humanity; how they have given up life and broken all the ties of home to settle for their masters the question as to what nation shall have a monopoly of the markets in the near and far east. Poilu understands at last France's designs upon Morocco. Tommy Atkins begins to see the black spots in England's colonial history, and to learn at last of the diplomatic intrigues by which she prevented Germany from carrying out her purposes in the Bagdad railway concession from Turkey. Bosch understands at last the folly of Wilhelmstrasse with its nightmare project of forcing an alien *kultur* upon an unwilling world. And so on.

God! What vain regrets, what righteous indignation, must fill their souls at the thought of this great deception, this great illusion into which they were blindly drawn by the misguided, black-souled leaders in this great world crime.

Here, too, we have both the blessing and the curse. The curse—for it must be tragic for these free souls to see the sham and crime of it all, to realize that they have given their lives at the arbitrary command of a lot of degenerate chancellors among the nations. But the blessing is there, too. All this is behind them now. They see forward as well as backward, with the eyes of their spirits. The lines which divided them over here into hostile camps are all broken down over there. There are no more boundary lines for them over there; no question of national rights, no false standards of national honor. All is one country over there, one fatherland. Prussian, Tommy Atkins, Poilu, Slav; Hindu, Canadian, and all the rest of them whose spirits are now beyond the great divide; where there is no difference of language or tongue; where all speak the one language of the spirit—all these common peoples of the earth will be learning that they are all of one spirit. It is a state, this spirit-state, of mutual understanding and common love.

All blinds removed from the eyes of their spirits, all barriers broken down, the great tragedy of their life and death revealed at last! They, the innocent common peoples of the earth, slaughtered for a piece of seacoast for their masters on this earth! Oh! be sure they see it all now with the eyes of their spirits. It is tragic, yes. And they are wanting to save you and me, the

remaining common peoples of this earth, from continuing the sham and crime of it, yes. And the blessing of it all for them is that at last they are what, save for the deceptions and fallacies into which they were misled by their hell-bound leaders, they might have been on this earth—a united people, a people of one spirit and of one purpose of love.

VI.

For them. For us, I am hoping that they may not have died in vain. The ruthless, pitiless sacrifice of these poor wretches ought to bring home to our spirits, to us who are still among the living, the lesson they learned only in death. It ought and it will, if only we be able to see with the eyes of the spirit. For what's true over there is true over here, if we could but see it. Just as over there the souls of men are all of one spirit; no boundary lines; just one great family of souls, living, and loving, and working together in and for the Great Spirit—so over here, if we did but know it, men and nations are all of one blood; the common interest of the common people one; the same Great Spirit, even the spirit of perfect love in us all.

What's true already for the rarer souls among living men today will one day be true for all men. Some day the boundary lines over which we now murder der each other will all have disappeared from this earth, too. And with them, all the greed and lust which have too long made degenerates of the princes and potentates of this world. Maybe men will still speak in different tongues, but they will speak a common language, even the language of the spirit. Men will no longer acknowledge allegiance to this or that separated nation with its false standards of honor and right. Men will acknowledge only one allegiance, an allegiance to all humanity; and only one standard of right and honor, the rights and the honors that belong inalienably to all the great common peoples of the earth. These rights and honors cannot be defended with the ancient weapons of tooth, and claw, and fang. Nor in that great day will they have any need of this or any other defense; for they are the common rights and the common honors due to all mankind, to the least as well as to the greatest among men. When the life of the spirits beyond the great divide has invaded and taken possession of the souls of men on this side—in that great day all these rights and honors will be freely granted and assured to all mankind by the United Common Peoples of the Earth.

The Need of a True Perspective

By Rev. Arthur L. Weatherly,

Minister of All Souls' Church, Lincoln, Neb.

UNLESS the heart of society is sound, there cannot be health in the body. An age in which men and women seek physical pleasure above all else means decadence rather than progress. The "Movies," with their lurid plots and coarse and often vulgar appeals to the crowd, are filled day after day to overflowing. The theatre is given over to musical comedies which have only a modicum of wit and even less of clothes. The highest paid men on the staffs of our universities are the football coaches. Our magazines publish reams of silly and idle stories. Our newspapers seek sensational news with little concern for the truth. Large numbers of men and women are willing to sell their literary skill to the highest bidder. They will, for pay, advocate any cause or furnish stories that will mislead the public. Unseen forces, guided by special interests, all too often control our elections. The widespread craze for the dance, the interest in the vain display of wealth, seem to preclude any serious interest in public welfare. A hasty survey of society reveals sordidness at the top and the bottom. Classes seem to be arrayed against one another in deadly conflict. Lavish display of wealth is seen on our Broadways alongside of degrading, disease-bearing poverty.

Is this a revelation of the heart of society? Is here the hope of the future?

If it is, there is surely no health in us. Here is not the soil in which strong men grow. In this environment the moral stuff of which leaders of men are made is not developed. If this is all there is in America, surely the faithful few must sit in sackcloth and ashes and bewail the coming of the morrow. If we are but a pleasure-loving people, if the fancy of the moment is the chief factor in the determination of conduct, there is no future for us in the Eternal Plan. Across our faces are written those words of shame, "Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin" "Thou art tried and found wanting."

But this is not the whole story. It is the story told many times by men and women who, like the prophets of old, feel called upon to picture the weaknesses of the age. Many, after a superficial survey of the society of today, think that it is true. The daily paper reports our misdeeds. Our good deeds are so common that they are not news. The readers of the press often forget that it is the unusual, not the usual, that we consider news. The picture that I have drawn of modern society is the one presented to us every morning at the breakfast table as we read the "news of the day." But this is not a picture of life. It is a distorted vision of society. It bears about the same resemblance to the real life of today as the curved mirrors give of the form of the person reflected by them. Fed day by day on such distorted reports of the communities in which we live, it is small wonder that many men lose faith in mankind.

In the background of human life there are the men and women who daily serve and wait. There is the devotion of parents, the love of mothers, and the toil of fathers. There are the teachers in our schools who daily, for small and inadequate wage, with serious joy, give their hearts and minds to the service of their country.

Behind all the daily picturing of our misdeeds are the thousands who meet temptation and overcome it. In the warp and woof of our life there are the plain people who are the yeomanry of our democracy. They are clean in their private lives and honest in their dealings with others. Here are found widows, who with grim and unyielding determination rear a family to serve the state; men who fight the battle to the end without a word of complaint; young and old who do as faithfully as they know how the task that is set before them. These are the ones who are laying the foundations of the civilization of tomorrow. We must not forget the "divinely discontented" ones who see the wrong and have a vision of the more beautiful world; the unnumbered ones toil in obscurity for the better day. Among these we are close to the real heart of society.

We fail and terribly fail if we do not make again and again a careful survey of the world in which we live. We will not know how to meet the forces of evil if we do not recognize the forces that make for righteousness. We need not blind our eyes to the sordidness and selfishness of men; we need not deny the evil in the world. That will do no good. We must face bravely and resolutely the facts of life. But we must not permit ourselves to be blinded to the more important facts by those that are thrust before us daily. The weekly and monthly papers and magazines that report the progress of the forward movements in the world; the messengers of light and life that every now and then come among us; the occasional word of a beautiful and heroic deed that we find in the daily press, all these are sources of information that we must not overlook or forget. There are more than seven thousand men and women that "have not bowed the knee to Baal." We still rise to the imperious call of a great and impelling duty. Women go down into the "valley of the shadow of death" to bring life into the world. Fathers sacrifice without a murmur for their children. Friendship still is real, and that comradeship which beautifies and ennobles life is seen on every hand.

Much of our cynicism is due to the fact that we have a distorted view of life. We lose faith in men because we have thrust upon us these reiterations of the weaknesses of men. We need to go up weekly, if not daily, to the Mount of High Vision. We need to get away from the poisonous mists of the lowlands, away from deadly miasmas of swamps of distrust, up on the

highlands from which we can catch glimpses of the Eternal City of the Spirit. Once there we can see in the broad view those distinguishing marks of life that were unseen from below. Then, when we return to the lower levels of life, we can more easily recognize that which before was unseen and even hidden from our eyes.

The Sunday service is a call to the mountains. It takes us to the heights of life. It is a revelation to us of what is at the very heart of life. It gives us a vision. It is an entrance to the truth. Fed day by day with a view of life in its lowest and most vicious forms, we need to come face to face with the living realities that have survived the ages and which bridge the centuries.

If we are to keep alive Faith, Hope, and Love, which are essential to the maintenance of a well-ordered life, if we are to live in the fullest sense, we must come again and again face to face with the fundamental facts which are sources of power and courage.

To meet in a warm, vital fellowship, to hear the ancient words which have brought life and hope to the children of men through the ages and the messages of the modern prophets, to consider some one of the vital questions that take one deep into the heart of reality, are a means of purifying our souls and of getting a new grip on life.

To have even for a moment a vision of a great truth brings to us a new sense of our own worth. To think seriously of our own duty is to come face to face with our mission in life. We need to escape for a while the storm and stress of life. We need to think calmly and sanely of our relation to the Greater Life of which we are a part. If our Sunday morning service does this for us, we go forth from it with our courage strengthened and hope quickened. We have found a vantage ground from which we can get a true perspective of life. We thus help to keep the heart of society sound.

I hold the deepest self-surrender, the noblest sacrifice to God, lies mainly in going into the world, not in running away from it. It is there that your devotion displays itself at its highest and best.—*George Matheson.*

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

In accordance with the vote passed at the annual meeting of the American Unitarian Association in 1915, the Nominating Committee desires to publish a copy of the ballot they have prepared for use at the annual meeting of 1917:

President (for one year)—Samuel A. Eliot, Cambridge, Mass.

Vice-Presidents (for one year) from Northern New England: Clarence E. Carr, Andover, N. H.; from Southern New England: William H. Taft, New Haven, Conn.; from Middle States: Frank H. Hiscock, Syracuse, N. Y.; from Southern States: George Soule, New Orleans, La.; from Central West: John Lawrence Mauran, St. Louis, Mo.; from Rocky Mountain States: Paris Gibson, Great Falls, Mont.; from Pacific Coast: William H. Carruth, Palo Alto, Cal.; from Dominion of Canada: Milton L. Hersey, Montreal, Canada.

Secretary (for one year)—Louis C. Cornish, Boston, Mass.

Assistant Secretary (for one year)—W. Forbes Robertson, Arlington, Mass.

Treasurer (for one year)—Henry M. Williams, Cambridge, Mass.

Directors (for three years), from New England: Miss Anna M. Bancroft, Hopedale, Mass.; Chester W. Barrows, Providence, R. I.; Sanford Bates, Boston, Mass.; George W. Wheelwright, Jr., Boston, Mass.; from Middle and Southern States: Edward H. Letchworth, Buffalo, N. Y.; from Western and Pacific Coast: Rev. Minot O. Simons, Cleveland, Ohio.

Norman L. Bassett,
Mrs. Whitman Cross,
Henry D. Sharpe,
Eugene R. Shippen,
E. Raymond Sturtevant,
Nominating Committee.

The Church is today afflicted with the spirit of self-excusing; it cannot give, because of the depression of the times; it cannot go upon its mighty errand, because of its dainty delicateness; it cannot engage in active beneficence, because its charity should begin at home; it cannot enter into ardent controversy, because it prefers the comfort of inaction. Churches should not tell lies to themselves.—*Joseph Parker.*

It is not difficult to get away into retirement and there live upon your own convictions; nor is it difficult to mix with men and follow their convictions; but to enter into the world and there live out firmly and fearlessly according to your own conscience —that is Christian greatness.—*F. W. Robertson.*

WESTERN CONFERENCE NEWS

The coming annual meeting of the Conference at Des Moines, May 7-9, is in large measure absorbing the attention at headquarters. This is the first time the Conference has met so far west and also the first time it has ever met so early in the month of May, giving a whole week before the May meetings in Boston. It is hoped that the breaking of precedents in both particulars will be amply justified by the results. The treasurer has just sent out the following letter to the churches:

TREASURER'S REPORT

"At this season of the year the treasurer is reminded that it again becomes his duty to ask the churches of the Western Unitarian Conference for their contributions for its support.

"These contributions should be sent in right away, or at least as early in April as possible, in order that the reports of the various officers, on which are based the financial plans of the directors, may be completed and considered in time to be presented at the Conference, which this year meets one week earlier than usual.

"Kindly bear in mind that we are now managing independently our sales of American Unitarian Association publications—books, church and school supplies—a work which in former years was largely conducted by the Association. The initial expense of this change is considerable, and contributions should be increased to meet it.

"May we hope for a prompt and liberal response to this appeal.

"Very truly yours,

"CHARLES B. FOOTE,

"*Treasurer.*"

Clearly all contributions should be in hand by May 1st and must be in hand by May 4th in order to be included in the treasurer's report.

While the program is not yet complete, the general outline is here set forth. The opening session on Monday evening, May 7th, will be devoted to the Conference sermon. The main business session of the Conference will occupy Tuesday forenoon, May 8th. It is hoped also to devote part of this session to a consideration of "The Call of the West to Unitarians." This will be interpreted by some of the men who have recently taken up work in the district and who will speak out of fresh impressions. The afternoon session will have for its general topic "Unitarian *Esprit de Corps*," with some consideration of our method of uniting local autonomy with national effectiveness, some voicing of the fundamental harmonizing elements in American Unitarianism and consideration of the call for wider denominational service. The evening session will bring two addresses covering the unifying tendency, first, in modern scientific thought and, second, in modern religious thought. The Wednesday forenoon session will carry further the discussion of efforts for unity of spirit by a consideration of the meeting of the East and the West in the recent visit of Rabindranath Tagore and the unifying elements in current philosophical thought. The afternoon session on this day will be arranged by Mrs. Chamberlain, vice-president of the National Alliance of Unitarian Women for this district. The meetings will conclude with a supper at the church, where the addresses will deal with emotional and practical efforts towards world brotherhood. The complete program will appear in the May issue of the ADVANCE and will be in the hands of the churches in due season.

OHIO.

The reorganizing of the Sunday school has been the major aim of the work in connection with the First Church of Dayton for the past two months. The overhauling has resulted in a threefold form of activity. The teaching material has been entirely regrouped so that it would be more in line with the New Beacon Course, and that teachers would more easily find suitable material. The second form is that of dramatic activity, providing for every grade some sort of dramatic expression. The third is that of a graded program of social service, to meet the interests and needs of the different ages.

The new system has already evoked much interest and enlisted the support of many additional workers. The children of the lower grades, up to the senior grade, have just completed their first piece of work. They were given blank books and told to fill them with picture clippings from various sources, arranging the clippings according to the plan of a house and garden. The result has been a wonderful exhibition of skill, humor, and descriminating selection. The filled books show grounds, houses, and their interiors, including furniture, people, pets, company, musical instruments, flowers, etc. All of this was built up out of pictures clipped from magazines, etc. One child had grouped the whole family on the first inside page, in which Susan B. Anthony was grandma, Tolstoy grandpa, two noted Americans father and mother, and a lot of children of various nationalities were the children.

One of the by-products of this work was the enlistment of the interest of parents. It was said that two men gave up their evenings to help their children find, cut, and paste pictures, and that they got as excited over it as the children. When the books

were returned the children were instructed to bring all the pictures they could find which were suitable for filling another scrapbook. The school will send these books, together with blank books and the uncut pictures, to the children of the Pine Mountain School. The children are now at work making little utility articles which will sell at a children's bazaar to be held in April. There will be a supper served with the help of the Alliance, which will be followed by an illustrated travel talk. The proceeds will be used to send crippled children to the country during the coming summer. This work has also created intense interest, both among the children and their parents. An adult class has been organized in the school, which meets with the school and has attained an attendance of thirty-five. The splendid promise for the work is the support of an extraordinary group of workers, whose intelligence, energy, and loyalty, are an inspiration.

The minister, Rev. John Morris Evans, has been here only a little over three months, but the extraordinary growth in the size of the congregations speaks strongly for the growing interest of the people in his ministry. There has been no attempt at any special attractions, it being thought best to make a thorough diagnosis of the needs of the parish. The following are the sermon subjects for March: "How Did the Idea of God Begin?" "Is Christianity the Final Religion?" "How Can We Mobilize the Soul's Fidelities?" "Has Faith a Dynamic Quality?" "Can the Modern Man Be Religious?" The church has added five new members already, and there are prospects of many more before long.

The Women's Alliance has had a very successful year, and their work towards the sociability of the church's life has been very valuable.

ILLINOIS.

Chicago Unitarians were privileged to hear Dr. S. M. Crothers of Cambridge on three successive evenings in the latter part of February. Two of these meetings, on Sunday and Monday evening, were held at Lincoln Centre, the third meeting being a supper at the City Club. In the first of his addresses Mr. Crothers spoke of "The Call of the Church." He held that fundamentally the church offers fellowship to men who are seeking to live the larger, more spiritual life. It responds to and quickens man's aspirations and corroborates and solidifies his trust that the best is the truest. The historic churches have always met some of the innate longings of the lonely soul, and we would gladly take our place in them, but are prevented by the dogmas from such entrance. Hence the need, the insistent need, for a church which shall answer to the needs of men's souls and grant its fellowship without such barriers of dogma as shall necessarily bar free spirits.

In his second address Dr. Crothers pointed out that historical Unitarianism had been extremely individualistic, from the circumstances of its birth and early stages; perhaps necessarily so, but that now it was quite clear that the greater loyalty bade us grow out of our individualism into a mighty social force. He set before his hearers the change in the teachings of his friend, Prof. Royce, who began as an extreme individualist, but in his closing years became the apostle of the philosophy of loyalty which teaches the soul to pass from the narrower, more individual loyalty to the service of social and universal ends. In his address at the supper at the City Club the appeal was carried a little farther and made a little more specific, the duty and the opportunity of the Unitarian church at this present time being distinctly brought home. In response to questions Mr. Crothers told of the great Forward Meetings in Boston, which he had a share in organizing, and of certain experiences of his present pilgrimage in the Middle West. Those who were fortunate enough to hear Mr. Crothers took away increased courage and increased enthusiasm.

During the month of March Rev. Fred V. Hawley was absent from his pulpit on two Sundays, being called to Michigan by the serious illness and death of his father. The pulpit of Unity Church was acceptably supplied on both Sundays by members of the church. Mr. W. M. Welch took charge on March 11th and spoke in a most fascinating manner of the religious experiences in his own life. Dr. W. K. Harrison conducted the service on the second Sunday and read a sermon which had been delivered to the Unity Church congregation some thirty years ago by Dr. Robert Collyer, entitled "Every Man a Penny."

At the Third Church in Chicago the sermon subjects for March were: "The Pacificists and War," "Moral Consequences," "The Renewal of Youth," "Identifying Divinity." The Fellowship Club and the Women's Alliance continued in the full tide of their work during the month, and the Associate Alliance met with the church on March 1st, the meeting being elsewhere reported in this issue. A concert by Miss Ruth Breytspraak, a member of the church and a violinist of growing power, was given in the church auditorium on the evening of March 30th.

Lincoln Centre was generously placed at the disposal of Unitarians of Chicago for the two series of meetings addressed by Rev. John Haynes Holmes of New York and Rev. S. M. Crothers of Cambridge. Mr. Jones flitted from Chicago just before the coming of Dr. Crothers to take part in the dedication of a Lincoln Memorial at Hodgenville, Ky.,

and after that to speak at various points in the South and East.

The Chicago Associate Alliance met March 1st at the Third Unitarian Church. Mrs. Leavitt, one of the vice-presidents, presided, as the president, Mrs. Lynn, was not able to be present on account of illness in the family. Mr. Theodore Dahmen was the speaker. Mrs. A. M. Lewis gave a most interesting paper on "Religious News." The next meeting was announced to be held at Hinsdale, May 3rd, when officers will be nominated for next year. The meeting adjourned to the church parlors, where luncheon was served and a social hour followed.

Mrs. Susan R. Conger died Feb. 12, 1917. When we enter the Alliance meeting, we are conscious of something missing, of a presence gone, of a vanished form, of a voice stilled, whose hearty greeting every one loves to remember. Her executive ability and her quick eye and mind were always ready to jealously guard the interests of the Alliance and direct the activities of its members into channels where they would find best expression. Identified with the Third Unitarian Church from the beginning, she was one of the pioneers in the work on the West Side and a leader in all efforts to help the poor and unfortunate. She lived a noble and unselfish life, and her work will long be remembered.

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WISCONSIN.

The Forward Movement in Milwaukee was continued in the latter part of February by a series of meetings conducted by Rev. S. M. Crothers, D. D., of Cambridge, Mass. Several thousand pamphlets were distributed at the meetings in the church, and several hundred people attended the subsequent free discussions in the church parlors. The movement was carried farther in the latter part of March in special meetings addressed by Rev. Albert R. Vail of Urbana.

At Madison the pastor, Rev. F. A. Gilmore, was on leave of absence for the month of March doing missionary work for the American Unitarian Association in the Southwest. The pulpit has been supplied by Rev. E. C. Smith, secretary of the Western Conference, by Rev. L. B. Fisher, D. D., Dean of Ryder Divinity School, and by Rev. W. F. Greenman of Milwaukee.

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IOWA.

At Davenport the sermon subjects for the month of March were: "Getting Rid of God," "The Right to Rule," "The Demand for a Spiritual Awakening." On one Sunday Professor Zueblin occupied the pulpit. On March 12th Mr. Newton Van Dalsen gave a lecture to the Men's Club on "Industrial Education."

At Iowa City the sermon topics for March were: "John Bunyan or Jesus?"—Individualism or social democracy? "The Prayer of a Free Spirit"—Not helpless begging, but self-reliant action; "Through Man to God"—No copyrighted means of grace; "Christianity and Single Tax"—Nothing sacred but righteousness. At the meetings of the Young People's Society Mrs. Clara M. Daley spoke of "Women and Work;" Grace Altschuler, Walker Knierem and Esther Fiester brought a report on Oakdale Sanitarium; Miss Himena Hoffman spoke of "Early American Neutrality," and Professor H. F. Goodrich of "Uniformity in Marriage and Divorce."

During the past year the Unitarian Church at Des Moines has made several innovations. The membership of the board of trustees has been increased from nine to fifteen and no collections have been taken. The members and others interested in supporting the church have been asked to make their subscriptions by the year. A movement is now going on to make our church a seven-day church. Sign boards have been placed at conspicuous points on the streets surrounding the church with information about the church and an invitation to attend. Plans are being made to provide an office for Mr. Reese at the church. He has a theory that the minister, like other business men, should be accessible and that the man who is hard to find is not worth finding.

Channing Club has conducted a variety of activities. The young people have had several social affairs; they have brought the Wisconsin Players here for an entertainment and put on a light theatrical of their own. Dr. Florence Richardson, of the Department of Psychology at Drake University, gave a lecture on the subject, "Feeling and Religion," and Mr. I. N. McCrillis, the noted Socialist, spoke to the club. The social service idea is well developed in the young people. During the recent coal famine, Miss Grace Van Evera, president of the club, hauled coal to emergency cases in her automobile.

The Keokuk Church reports considerable activity in the Alliance, mostly in the direction of earning money for the support of the church. Monthly food sales have been well patronized. Picnic suppers have been held twice during the winter in the church parlors. The Sunday school, while small, has a very high percentage of attendance. During a series of revival services Unitarian literature was somewhat widely distributed throughout the town.

Sioux City.—Since the resignation of Rev. R. D. Van Tassel as pastor of Unity Church, regular services have been held and will be held until a new minister is secured. Early in January the people listened to the inspiring challenges of Rev. Ernest C. Smith, Secretary of the Western Conference. On the last two Sundays of the month the pulpit was occupied by Rev. A. M. Judy, the Preacher-Farmer of Davenport, who presented a glimpse of the spiritual significances of farm-

ing and rural life. Rev. Oswald Helsing, a recruit to Unitarian ranks, will preach during February.

Unity Church is in no hurry to secure a successor to Mr. Van Tassel, and is not "candidating" in the usual sense. The people hope eventually to obtain a minister who will be the right man for the place, and to this end they choose to take sufficient time to get acquainted with the availables, and to judge not so much by comparison, one with another, as by a composite estimate of each man's quality and character.

The Sunday school is increasing steadily in numbers and efficiency, and—what is more to the point—in the interest shown by the pupils. Superintendent Fields, with constructive zeal, has collected a corps of enthusiastic teachers and has injected into this department of the church's activities a decided element of growth.

The Forum, shuttling from noonday to evening sessions and back again, with some difficulty in rounding up speakers, has not flourished as it should, but the idea is still alive, and this deliberative body remains the church's single effort to sustain lay communion in intellectual affairs.

Unity Circle and Unity Guild—respectively, the senior and junior ladies' auxiliary bodies of the church—are keeping up their long record for loyal fellowship and effective service.

Generally speaking, the church is on a more healthy plane of development than it has been for many years. As the city grows in population and civic importance, so will this liberal society flourish under the wise guidance of an inspired leader who shall devote his whole heart to the central theme without cutting the wires from the Great Outside.

Nebraska.

Unitarians of Omaha have been busily and happily engaged in the reestablishment of the church which began over a year ago. Just at present the chief object of attention is the new building. Having secured, by dint of protracted and difficult negotiation, a very desirable lot, the congregation appointed a building committee, headed by Mr. Bernard W. Capen, a finance committee, headed by Mr. William F. Baxter, and from its own membership selected an able architect in the person of Mr. Alan McDonald. Pledged contributions have already passed the $10,000.00 mark, and preliminary plans have been drawn giving promise of an edifice of which the denomination and the city will have reason to be proud.

Meanwhile services are being held in a dance hall which lends itself surprisingly well to the purpose. In decent weather the congregations average upwards of one hundred. The best feature of this, and the cause of it, is the nucleus of representative men and women who are giving the movement their personal support, loyally, cheerfully, unitedly.

The church school, though small, is growing, includes classes from kindergarten to adult, and evidences the same brand of lively interest.

Open every week day is a suite of three rooms centrally located, "Unitarian Headquarters," serving as a temporary base of operations for trustees, committees, Alliance, the minister, and the parish assistant. Here, every Wednesday morning, a mail-order department (alias Post Office Mission) is conducted by a committee of women, and every Sunday evening a light supper is served followed by singing under professional leadership.

The Apostle from New York included Omaha in his busy missionary journey through the Middle West. An audience of over five hundred gathered in Boyd's Theatre to hear his great address on "The International Mind." Incidentally this event earned $110 for the new church.

Healthy, is how things look, from the inside. The church is young and growing. Not young in years, for it has had an honorable history covering forty years. Hard times came, as they did in many other localities; supporters dropped away; the church was almost disbanded for three years; but the faithful remnant would not have it so, and now there is a new life commenced with the momentum of an inspiring inheritance.

This country, as well as the rest of the planet, shows signs of a spiritual awakening. News items in the Advance and *Register* indicate that Unitarians are helping in it and being helped by it. Likewise the Unitarians of Omaha

At Lincoln the sermon topics for March were: "Values of Life," "A Real Belief in God," "The Growing Christ," "The Irresistible Spiritual Forces." The *Church Calendar* for March notes the regular Sunday meetings of the Students' Liberal Religious Union, the meeting of the Camp Fire Girls, two "At Homes" of the minister and his wife, one for the students and the young people of the church, the other for the congregation as a whole. At this latter meeting the subject for conversation was, "How Can the Average Life be Made to Count?" There were also meetings of the Kensington and the monthly luncheon of the Women's Alliance, the Men's Club luncheon and a Men's Club dinner at which Dr. R. L. Walcott spoke on "Our Nebraska Birds." The boys met with the Men's Club on this occasion.

We and God have business with each other and in opening ourselves to his influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled.—*William James.*

MIDDLE STATES' LETTER.

Rev. Edgar Swan Wiers' withdrawal from the field of religious journalism is—and will speedily be still more—regretted by all the ministers, save one, of the North Jersey Association.

The official and unabbreviated title of the latter is the "U. M. A. of N. N. J." And being probably the youngest of our ministerial unions, let its horoscope be cast. Briefly, it was born on December 8, 1916, and at Orange. Thither, after some preliminary conversations, seven Unitarian friars made pilgrimage, summoned by their dean and host, Rev. Walter Hunt. And there, when each had told of his work honestly, and all had discussed sundry missionary possibilities, finally the step was taken. "A constitution was drawn up?" Nay, they were serious-minded men. "Of what use a constitution between friends?" Simply, they elected their host President, impressed a Secretary, and adjourned to meet at Montclair, and again at Summit, carrying forward meanwhile their plans for the closer organization of our New Jersey forces. For behind them were ten churches, none so very old, two but infants in fact, albeit promising ones. When a year-old society, like Trenton, averages 120 at its evening services, what will it average when it is ten years old? Furthermore, these churches have for the most part a similar constituency, are "commuting churches" whose members keep their worship and work quite separate, and yet withal are progressive—are churches with a common spirit and problems. Hitherto, however, their visible unity has been largely geographical. They have had too little real contact—though (how familiar it sounds) "There was a Liberal Club *once*, which met over in New York," while, be it gladly added, there *is* an Associate Alliance meeting annually. But now the soothsayers are abroad. "Time to get together," they say. "Our needs and outlook are somewhat different from those of Manhattan Island. Let us organize here in Jersey. Meet, yes, eat in Jersey, laymen and clergy as well as women; strengthen each other's hands in New Jersey, develop a local esprit de corps, perhaps essay new ventures." Thus the soothsayers, not all of them priests by the way, and to this end behold the many-lettered association in conjunction with the aforesaid Alliance is arranging an April meeting at Passaic, with Messrs. Sullivan and Reeman for chief prophets. So far the oracles. For later developments see future columns of THE ADVANCE.

Let it not be inferred from this, however, that Jersey Unitarians will henceforth make Newark their Mecca, nor longer cross the Hudson to do shopping—and fraternize at 104 E. Twentieth, with liberally inclined Gothamites. No, they will still go (some of them) to the League which, despite a stormy day now and then, has been gaining "new visions," this winter, of the family and society from the lips of our seers, Messrs. Boynton and Lathrop being among the last —or again to the Sunday School Union, whose mid-year meeting in Brooklyn was well attended, not only the luncheon but the addresses being attractive. Nor is this all one may say of Metropolitan Unitarianism. Hard though it is to lose Mr. Fairley from the Secretary's desk, and to know of Dr. Brundage's illness, still otherwise, from the Bronx to Flushing with its new building, the word from the individual churches, both "pacifist" and "militarist," is encouraging, often inspiring, and will be even more so in another month. For something is going to happen to New York. Well guarded the Narrows may be with submarine nets and newly constructed forts, but on the landward side the approaches are open. Naught can withstand the crusaders who, having reduced Philadelphia, Paterson, Boston, Buffalo, and other suburbs, will shortly invade the city where Naseby said he found "not original sin but the refined article." In other words, Sunday is at hand.

And what shall be the attitude of the liberal churches toward him? Hostile, indifferent, or "the glad hand"? That they extend the latter was the wish of an "Evangelical" speaker at the February meeting of the Liberal Club. "I hate to hear folks talk of neutrality," quoth he. "I have met Mr. Sunday, seen him in his *robe de nuit*. For the sake of the good he accomplishes, let us overlook his archaic theology." President Eliot, however, who spoke on the same occasion, was not quite so "tolerant." While admitting some good accomplished, and deprecating controversy, he felt that Mr. Sunday's doctrinal absurdities could not be so lightly ignored—even though the evangelist continued to display the same affection for Unitarians that he did in Boston, where he bowed "at the grave of Channing." On the whole, the temper of the meeting seemed to favor an "armed neutrality" toward the revival, with emphasis on the "armed." And since then the feeling has become a conviction. Without seeking controversy that is, the liberal ministers will utilize the opportunity to present and spread still more broadly the principles of their faith. Already, at All Souls' Church, Dr. Sullivan has begun speaking, Sunday evenings, on the "Liberal Faith in Its Relation to Old and New Issues." Soon, from all our metropolitan pulpits in unison, the good tidings will go forth. With the result—well, judging from the experience

elsewhere, we may again cover with shame the pessimist who suggested at a recent League meeting—"A Unitarian revival? 'Twould be like a funeral where only the immediate relatives were present."

Meanwhile, White Plains is going forward with its building project—if it can but raise that last few hundred dollars. Newburgh is hoping to secure, and soon, a successor to Mr. Wilson. And—not to linger over forums and special services—a hundred miles away by the Delaware, a curious ecclesiastical situation is gradually being relieved. For there around Philadelphia, a few months since, our churches seemed tending toward "Quakerism." From Baltimore up to Northumberland, but three out of eight had settled pastors, including one recent arrival. On good Dr. Hinckley at Wilmington fell the chief responsibility of maintaining the "Joseph Priestly" traditions. But now he at last is gaining fresh coadjutors. From Concord, N. H., Wing comes to Baltimore. While in the Quaker City, passing over rumors as to the old First Church, at least the Girard Ave. Society has secured a new leader —Rev. William D. Parry, a newcomer into our ranks, who leaves a large Methodist church at Trenton to take up the work so generously carried on the past year by Dr. MacFarland. None who know both the difficulties and possibilities of his new charge (the former "Spring Garden" Society) but will give him a hearty "Godspeed." Parenthetically, be it added, how clearly the average newspaper man understands Unitarianism is well shown by this delicious bit from a Philadelphia paper:

"Dr. Parry's conversion to the Unitarian church is making quite a sensation. He made no special studies in theology to enter the denomination, but upon expressing his willingness to adopt the *new creed* was at once admitted and *appointed* to the vacant charge."

Yet, after all, would the average Unitarian do much better in explaining the traditions and privileges of the "Uniate" clergy?

Further west, the Seventh Congress of the National Federation of Religious Liberals has just been held at Pittsburgh. And though feeble the echoes therefrom in the New York press, still one knows from these and its good program that it testified as ever to "the unities of the spirit and the bonds of peace." If only said bonds could be attached to the right parties. Which brings us back to earth again and New York, and March, 1917, with the liners making ready to slip away into the mists. What lies ahead for them and for us? Will Sunday revive the metropolis as per program, or will something else stir it and rouse it far beyond the power of his gymnastic eloquence?

Quien sabe?

K. E. Evans.

LEAGUE REPORT.

The regular meeting of the New York League of Unitarian Women was held Friday, March 2, 1917, at All Souls' Church, New York.

Mrs. Lawson, the first vice-president, presided and opened the meeting by reading a short selection from Emerson.

The annual election of officers was held which resulted as follows:

Mrs. N. J. Bishoprick—President.

Mrs. Walter U. Lawson—First Vice-President.

Mrs. Frank C. Doran—Second Vice-President.

Mrs. Frederick C. Brush—Third Vice-President.

Mrs. William Voigt—Fourth Vice-President.

Miss Ida Slade—Fifth Vice-President.

Mrs. George C. Cressey—Sixth Vice-President.

Miss Maud M. Farnell—Treasurer.

Mrs. I. W. Banta—Recording Secretary.

Mrs. Dexter D. Ashley—Corresponding Secretary.

Mrs. M. D. Barry—Director for three years.

The minutes of the last meeting and treasurer's report were read and accepted.

At the next League Tea, at Headquarters, the Yonkers' Branch will act as hostesses. The report of the Philanthropic Committee was made by Mrs. Glogau, who, with others, is taking great interest in the welfare of the feeble-minded. A very interesting talk was given on that subject by Dr. Bernstine of Rome, N. Y.

The appeal for the collection was made by Mrs. Harding in behalf of a small church at Laurence, Mass. The amount collected was $38.30. It was voted that a letter be sent to Mrs. Bishoprick, expressing the sympathy of the League on the sad death of her husband.

The speaker of the day was Mr. John Lathrop of Brooklyn. For his subject he chose the "Vision of the Home." Mr. Sullivan, pastor of the church, extended to all a welcome. Several notices were read of fairs and lectures to be held during the month.

Mrs. Sullivan, president of the Branch Alliance, extended to all an invitation to remain for luncheon. The meeting closed with the reciting of the Lord's Prayer, led by Mr. Sullivan.

ADA L. BARRY.

I charge you to take for your helmet the hope of salvation. Whatever you do, never let a painful inspection rob you of a great expectation. If, as you live, you try to live faithfully, then, as the Lord liveth, try to live hopefully, or you will miss the better half of your living. Robert Collyer.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE NOTES

Austin Texas.

Rev. Frank A. Gilmore, pastor of the Unitarian Church in Madison, Wis., is now spending a month in the balmy climate of Texas, with the tonic reaction of the responsibilities of the Unitarian services while here. Mr. Gilmore's experience of a most successful University church makes him peculiarly helpful here, where the constituency is so largely made up of Texas University professors and students. A most stimulating visit from Dr. Samuel A. Eliot of the American Unitarian Association paved the way for Mr. Gilmore's coming, and an audience of over two hundred gathered in the auditorium of the University Y. M. C. A. to hear him speak. Mr. Gilmore is holding services in a hall over a fire house, the only available place for regular meetings, and encouraging congregations are coming to hear him.

San Antonio, Texas.

We have held our services since the beginning of things, five years ago, in Odd Fellows' Hall, a most congenial and comfortable place, though located in the sixth story of a small hotel. When, at the beginning of the year, we received word that the Odd Fellows were no longer able to rent their hall to us, we felt that catastrophe had indeed fallen upon us. It proved rather our good fortune. We were able to make a most satisfactory arrangement with the managers of one of the largest hotels in the city for the use of their beautiful and most favorably located ballroom, and since going there we have had a most gratifying increase of our average attendance.

Mr. Badger gave during January and February a series of sermons on "Values for Religion from Five Modern Dramas," and during Lent is giving a series on "Jesus of Nazareth: A Modern Interpretation of the Superb Life."

We have recently had two especially interesting meetings of the Men's Liberal Club, one addressed by the mayor of the city, Clinton Brown, on "Compulsory Voting," and one addressed by A. G. Moore on Nietzsche's Philosophy of Life."

A Young People's Society has been organized, which is reading modern dramas.

Our people enjoyed a most inspiring visit from Dr. S. A. Eliot, recently, the best part of which was a conference as to building plans with the final approval of the project presented elsewhere.

The minister's wife is not the least efficient asset of this society, but more than that, she has been recently elected President of the Woman's Club of San Antonio, by all odds the most influential woman's organization in this city.

Dallas, Texas.

For its home charity work the Dallas branch of the Alliance has been making garments for the Baby Camp. All-day sewing meetings are held once each month, when the members come together to sew for this worthy cause. Lunch is served at noon, and at 1:30 the business meeting is held. This has proved a very enjoyable day for the members, and more attend the business meeting than formerly.

Miss Saylor of the Welfare Board was with the Alliance at one of these meetings, and was so impressed with the activities of the organization that she urged Mrs. Gilmour, the President, to make a report before the Welfare Board. This report was a splendid one and was received very cordially.

For charity away from home the Alliance has contributed to a fund asked for by President S. A. Eliot for war relief, and to the fund for the people of Armenia and Syria.

A supper was held in January, when Mrs. J. E. Lenington was Chairman. In February the first cafeteria supper of the year was held. Both helped materially in increasing the treasury of the Alliance. At the latter supper Miss Chick gave two readings, Prof. Hans Kreissig two piano solos, and Mrs. G. Fred Thompson, accompanied by Prof. Kreissig, two songs. This program added much to the pleasure of the evening. The suppers of the Dallas church bring people together in a way that makes it seem as if they were one big family.

At the February social meeting of the Alliance, held at the home of Mrs. R. F. Gilderhaus, one of the associate members, Mrs. Stenger, read from Dickens' *Bleak House*.

The March social meeting was to have been held at Mrs. E. H. Pollard's, when Mrs. Stenger would have read from *David Copperfield*. This was postponed because of the sudden death of L. S. Thorne, one of the charter members of the Dallas church. For the past few years ill health has made it impossible for Mr. Thorne to do active work in the church.

The topics of Mr. Gilmour's sermons for the past two months are as follows: "Tagore's Interpretation of Life;" "Tagore's Message to the Western World;" "Our Method in Religion, Perfect Mental Freedom;" "Our Guide in Religion, Enlightened Reason;" "The Anniversary of Thomas Paine—Great Believer in God and Immortality and the Rights of Man;" "Immortality in the Light of Modern Thought;" "Do the Dead Live? or 'Raymond' by Sir Oliver Lodge;" "Washington's Birthday Commemoration—A Religion of a Government—For and By the People."

Mrs. Florence Kelley, Secretary of the

National Consumers' League, spoke from the pulpit, Sunday morning, March 4, on "A New Application of the Golden Rule."

The Sunday school has about thirty pupils, exclusive of the adult class. Rain or shine, these thirty are there—a faithful group of children, who are scattered all over Dallas, but who are always in their places at the hour Sunday school begins. G. A. Eisonlohr, the superintendent, often tells the children that their example is one that older people could profitably follow.

Mrs. H. E. Spaulding, one of the teachers, has been, because of ill health, obliged to be away several Sundays, but Mrs. Gilmour made a most efficient substitute.

E. N. Willis, the leader of the adult class, has been discussing the work and the doctrine of Augustine.

The Young People's Religious Union has met at 5 o'clock on Sunday afternoons every two weeks. At one meeting Mr. Bentley spoke on "Faith." At another Mr. Gilmour talked on "Robert Elsmere."

W. P. Bentley is conducting the Unity Club Study Class, which meets twice a month.

HOUSTON, TEXAS.

The month of February brought no event of special importance to our Alliance except as we are a part of the church organization.

Dr. Eliot was here, February 22, and brought to our struggling church good cheer and encouragement which were much needed and highly appreciated. We, the members of the Alliance, feel that we have a friend in the Unitarian Association—a friend in need—and we shall work with the enthusiasm that comes from the heart.

We held our two regular meetings in February, also one church supper. We try to raise some money through the Larkin Company, and also by saving papers and magazines.

Our annual election of officers comes on March 6.

On the 14th Mrs. Willis will be with us, and we are looking forward with pleasure to her coming.

The unusually severe winter has been a hindrance, but we have held together and added a new name to our list occasionally.

LOUISVILLE, KY.

Church of the Messiah.—On Sunday, February 11, Rev. John Haynes Holmes of New York City delivered a sermon here on "The Religion of Tomorrow." It was a most impressive sermon, and was listened to by a large audience composed of many visitors as well as the general large congregation. The sermon was preceded by a very enjoyable musical program rendered by the regular choir, assisted by Miss Ruth Jones on the violin, and by Mr. Wolf, who sang admirably.

Mr. Holmes spoke earnestly and with strong, clear voice, which was easily heard by all present. He pictured the history of religion from the earliest aspirations of humanity unto the present day. He likened religion to a river, which, rising from its source, traverses in its wanderings to the ocean many divers ways in which its charity is sullied, its purity contaminated, and its course obstructed and changed, but which nevertheless finds its outlet to the ocean of truth.

In the religions of the past, he said, was emphasized only the need of individual salvation. Nothing else was of consequence so that one saved his own soul, but the religion of tomorrow would require of each one to help his brother man towards salvation. He strongly rebuked the ambitions of the different denominations in trying to secure from other denominations than their own acquisitions to their own congregations. He compared it to competition in business, and averred that the religion of the future would have many churches but few denominations. The Sunday school of tomorrow would no longer say, "Be good, little girl; be good, little boy;" but would seek the little girl and boy of the gutter and of the tenement and would feed them, clothe them, and make them self-respecting. The religion of tomorrow would cause the abolition of the gunman, the thief, the prostitute, by bettering social conditions and by the recognition and the practice of real brotherhood. We, he said, who have never suffered the temptations to which our unfortunate brother is exposed, ought to be very humble when we contemplate his shortcomings, and do all in our power to assist in the betterment of the religion of today which still falls far short of being the hoped-for, "Religion of Tomorrow."

In reviewing the work of our church during the past winter, we find much reason for gratification in things accomplished and inspiration for future effort.

Conspicuous among the work done is the new equipment and the reorganization of the church school. The large Sunday school room has been divided into classrooms by partitions, new tables and chairs have been provided, and a graded system of instruction is being used, all of which is a great step toward a greater efficiency of the church school. This summer four of the teachers, at their own expense, took a course of religious instruction in the Meadville Theological School, and several of the teachers are professional teachers, so that good work seems assured. The professional teachers are paid a salary in recognition of ability in their work. Miss Sila Breed superintends the church school work, and Miss Alexina Booth supervises and teaches in the kindergarten connected with the church school. At present a pleasant

rivalry is in progress between two factions among the children of the school. Each is trying to outclass the other in promptness and attendance. Little buttons, either blue or red, distinguish the participants. The results are very good. A beautiful flag and flagpole have been provided for the church school. Last Sunday the flag was raised, whereupon all the children arose and pledged their allegiance to that which the flag typifies. A little sketch was acted, in which the making of the first flag was depicted. The little actors, selected from the classes, spoke their parts in a very creditable manner. "America, the Beautiful," and other patriotic songs were sung. There is every reason to believe that under the able supervision of Mr. Supton and Miss Sila Breed the church school will become a strong factor in the work of the Church of the Messiah.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE MEETING.

The annual meeting of the Southern Unitarian Conference will be held this year in the Unitarian Church of Chattanooga, Tenn., on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, May 8th, 9th and 10th.

BOOK REVIEWS.

LOVE FOR THE BATTLE-TORN PEOPLES, *by Jenkin Lloyd Jones, D. D.* Chicago, Unity Publishing Company. 75c.

This consists of a series of sermon-studies which attempt to get away from the immediate issues of the great conflict now convulsing the world and, so far as one man may be privileged to do this, to lay the foundations for a better understanding of and sympathy with *all* the suffering nations across the sea on the part of American citizens. He tells us why Americans should love England, Germany, France, Italy, Russia, Turkey even, and pleads for recognition of the truth that "above all nations is humanity." He finds the causes of the present war in the pitiful conceits of a false nationalism which knows only tribal or national gods, and prays that America may be purged of all like destructive idolatry. It now looks as if the United States has been drawn into the great world conflict. Many will not agree with Dr. Jones that this is our shame; some will feel that it is our moral and spiritual salvation. But when the great conflict is over these messages of appreciation and good will will abide, helping us to know better our brothers across the sea, spurring us to a nobler form of emulation, quickening our faith in men as *men*, asking us to come up higher and *live* the ideals we profess. There is something timeless about the book and its message, despite the fact that it was called forth by the challenge of this immediate period in which we live.

RELIGION FOR TODAY, *by John Haynes Holmes* New York, Dodd, Mead & Co. $1.50.

This is the fifth volume within ten years from our virile and aggressive editorial colleague. It contains thirteen addresses selected from the many delivered during this ten-year period in the Messiah pulpit and elsewhere. They are chosen for publication because they express the author's conviction concerning some of the outstanding religious questions of our day. They fall naturally in four groups, entitled "Statements of Principle," "Aspects of Thought," "Social Applications," and "The War." These four groups are introduced by a discourse on "The New Religion," which the author holds will be scientific, ethical rather than theological, and highly socialized. The principles laid down are that we should follow truth rather than tradition, liberty rather than authority, and justice rather than charity (in the almsgiving sense). In the second section the dilemma of denial is shown and faith espoused as an energizer of the will, the personailty of God is defined and defended, and prayer is shown to be, in its essence, something mightier, saner and more valid than traditional conceptions would imply. The reader is likely to think that the author puts more of himself into the two concluding sections of the book than into those already noticed. Here he comes to the application of his principles and faiths to the social conditions of our time. Here we have the author of "The Revolutionary Function of the Church," the prophet not sure of acceptance of his vision, and on that account all the more earnest, vehement and insistent. The author will have nothing but "applied" religion, insists that very vision of truth and goodness shall produce effects in the world of human relations, yet is he uncompromising in his idealism. "It is not for me, as the minister of the church, to consider whether a certain individual act is unavoidable, but only whether it is wrong. It is not for me to ask whether a certain social reform is impracticable, but only whether it is just. It is not my business to explain or apologize or excuse or palliate; rather is it my business to define the standard, point the ideal, declare 'Thus saith the Lord.'" Under "Legislation and Morals" he points out that, while you cannot make men good by legislative act, such action may remove serious barriers and handicaps to the achievement of goodness. In the concluding section Mr. Holmes pleads the cause of peace. He is here uncompromising—tells us we must choose between Christ and Caesar, the God of love and the God of Battle, no middle course being possible. Whatever others may see, whatever others may do, in the world catastrophe he finds, not the downfall of Christianity, but a deeper revelation of the supreme value of the ideal of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

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The Western Unitarian Conference maintains offices at 105 South Dearborn St., Chicago, which are open daily from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. (Saturdays 9 a. m. to 3 p. m.). All publications of the American Unitarian Association, including those of the Religious Education Department, and of Unity Publishing Committee, as well as all denominational periodicals, are kept on sale and for distribution.

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For the fuller realization of the divine in the universe and in the heart of man. They believe that God is Infinite Spirit, the source of all life and truth, and that something of the nature of God may be apprehended by study of humanity, and of the world about us.

For belief in the divine humanity of Jesus, because they hold that all souls are children of the Infinite Spirit, and that the divine sonship is a universal manifestation, not a unique phenomenon.

For civic reform, economic justice, and social regeneration, believing that the mission of the church is now and here to establish the divine commonwealth of love and peace on earth.

For eternal life—not merely another life of blissful ease, which we shall discover beyond the grave; but life which already lays hold upon immortality because it is even now in harmony with God's divine order.